country; if so, what are the details thereof; and

(b) whether Government propose to start the scheme from Delhi; and if so, by when this would be done ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF URBAN DEVELOPMENT (SHRI M. ARUNACHALAM) : (a) and (b) With a view to improving the efficiency of management of municipal services and the resources available with urban local bodies for infrastructure, various measures have been under consideration of the Government, including involvement of the private sector for the provision of municipal services. While no specific scheme for privatisation of municipal services has been finalised by Government, series of discussions have been held with State Government, Development Authorities and larger Municipal Corporations on the subject, with a view to evolve policy guidelines in this regard. Since Local Self-Government is a State subject, a final decision regarding privatisation of municipal services has to be taken by the State Government/local body themselves.

Construction of High Dams in Himalayas

942. SHRI RAMNARAYAN GOSWAMI :

DR. R. K. PODDAR :

Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that construction of high dams in Himalayas region are unsafe;

(b) whether Government's attention has been drawn towards the warning of the geologists in this regard; and

(c) if so the details thereof and the reaction of Government in this regard ?

THE MINISTER OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRI V. C. SHUKLA) : (a) No, Sir. Since Independence a number of high dams have been constructed in the Himalayas e.g. Salal in Jammu and Kashmir, Bhakra in Punjab, Pong in Himachal Pradesh, Ramganga and Maneri in Uttar Pradesh, Kopili in Assam and these are all safe. It may be mentioned that even during earthquake of October, 1991, 39 metre high concrete gravity dam of Maneri near Uttar Kashi has not suffered and damage though it was located within the epicentral area.

(b) and (c) From time to time, Geologists in their individual capacity have drawn attention towards the tectonic and seismic features of the Himalayan region.

The Geologists of Geological Survey of India appraise and advise the Project Authorities regarding the regional geological set up, tectonics and seismicity of a project area and their likely impact on the proposed civil engineering structures. The design of the engineering structures are accordingly carried out by the Project Authorities in consultation with experts as per Indian standards.

Conference of Water Resources and Irrigation Ministers

943. SHRI KRISHAN LAL SHARMA : Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that a conference of Water Resources and Irrigation Ministers was held recently in the capital;

(b) whether it is also a fact that wastage of water in the country was discussed at the Conference and if so, what other points were discussed there; and

(c) the action Government propose to take or already taken on the points discussed at the conference ?

THE MINISTER OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRI V. C. SHUKLA) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) The points discussed in the Conference include Funding of Irrigation Projects; Provision of Water Supply from Irrigation Projects; Environmental preparation for Water Resources Projects; Rehabilitation measures for Water Resources Projects; Command Area Development Programmes; Rehabilitation of Minor Irrigation Tanks; Water Shed Programmes, Ground Water Recharge Programme; Flood Management; and Irrigation Management Policy. The recommendations made in the Conference have been finalised and sent to the State Governments.